

## REPORT ON INFORMATION COLLECTED CONCERNING APPLICANT

Under section 60835 of title 2 of the California Code of Regulations, the Bureau of State Audits is responsible for collecting information concerning applicants for the Citizens Redistricting Commission that is needed by the Applicant Review Panel to perform its responsibilities. This is a report by Bureau staff in compliance with that responsibility.

Name of Applicant: Brightstar Ohlson.

Information: In Applicant's fourth essay answer on her supplemental application, and in the "Employment History" section of the application, Applicant discussed her position as a Senior Associate with Gibson & Associates. According to its website, Gibson and Associates is an Oakland-based consulting firm that provides research, evaluation, fund development, and planning services to schools, non-profit organizations, and public agencies. Research by Bureau staff discovered three reports that Applicant co-authored as part of her work. One report, entitled *Increasing the Diversity of the Health Professions K-12 Networks of Support*, examined primary and secondary school networks of support in four California communities with a focus on what is needed to build upon past successes and to replicate exemplary practices in other communities. Another report, *City of Irvine: Strategic Plan for Children, Youth and Families 2008-2013*, documented a community planning process for the City of Irvine between October 2007 and February 2008, which involved five task forces, an advisory committee, and the participation of over 100 community members and stakeholders. The outcome of this process was the creation of a "Strategic Plan for Children, Youth, and Families" that provided the City of Irvine with a set of strategies to address six priority areas during the period 2008 through 2013: Pre-kindergarten Child Care & School Readiness; Health & Fitness; Underage Drinking; Support to Families in Need; Children's Mental Health; and Voluntarism & Community Service. The third report, entitled *Analyzing Cultural Models in Adolescent Accounts of Romantic Relationships*, documented a study of the cultural components of adolescent romantic relationships with an eye toward its relationship with scholastic behavior.

Applicant reported in the "Employment History" section of her supplemental application that since December 2009 she has been performing consulting work as an independent contractor in addition to performing work for Gibson & Associates. Staff asked Applicant about this work. Applicant responded that she so far she has had only one client – Safe Passages. Safe Passages is also her husband's employer, and one of Applicant's letters of recommendation was written by the Chief Executive Officer of Safe Passages. According to its website, Safe Passages is an inter-governmental partnership of the City of Oakland, the County of Alameda, and the Oakland Unified School District that is committed to advocating for children, youth, and families with a special emphasis on vulnerable populations within the County of Alameda. Regarding her statement in the supplemental application that she provides "advice on geographic boundaries of target neighborhoods for social service intervention," Applicant said that Safe Passages was applying for federal grants and needed information to define the neighborhoods or "beats" where funding is most needed and could best be utilized. The services she provided to Safe Passages

included quantitative and qualitative analysis of the overall population as well as of economic and demographic data. In the process of developing and providing this information, she reviewed and analyzed maps and census data.

When staff reviewed with Applicant the information contained in her application materials, staff discovered that Applicant had not disclosed information about her in-laws in the “Family Information” section of her supplemental application. Staff brought this omission to her attention, and Applicant replied that she had not been aware she was required to disclose information about her in-laws. Applicant subsequently submitted an amendment to her application to disclose the information.

Staff contacted Josefina Alvarado Mena, the author of one of Applicant’s letters of recommendation, to confirm the information provided in the letter and receive any additional information that may be relevant. Ms. Mena, who is the Chief Executive Officer of Safe Passages, confirmed the information in the letter. Ms. Mena stated that Safe Passages uses the services of a legislative analyst who provides information about new and existing state legislation. Safe Passages does not lobby and does not use lobbyists. Applicant provided analyses of quantitative and qualitative data that helped Safe Passages to improve its program by realigning resources. Ms. Mena stated that after observing Applicant present research findings at meetings attended by city and foundation representatives, she has augmented regard for her abilities. Staff asked Ms. Mena to elaborate on her statement in her letter of recommendation that Applicant “has the unique experience of working with a wide range of stakeholders, including both liberal and conservative foundations.” Ms. Mena explained that the foundations she was referring to included Atlantic Philanthropies, the Eisenhower Foundation, and the Irvine Foundation. The terms “liberal” and “conservative” were used in this context to refer to their political philosophies and funding traditions. Ms. Mena added that Applicant has bi-partisan orientations, and that she has worked for the betterment of her own city and other communities across the state.

Recommendation: None.

Name and Title of Person Submitting Report: Steven Benito Russo, Chief of Investigations

Report Date: September 17, 2010